JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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LITURGICAL TRENDS IN JAPAN

On January 18, National Council of Churches of Japan consultation on worship was convened under the chairmanship of Rev. Mr. Nishimura. Over two years has lapsed since the June 1957 consultation under the leadership of Dr. J. R. Chandran of the United Theological College, Bangalor, India, also a member of the study commission of the WCC.

The same members reported on the trends they had observed since they made their last report.

Rev. Mr. Ko Yuki, of the United Church and editor of "Worship and Music" reported that there is an increasing interest in worship among younger pastors. There have been papers on the subject and translations of Calvinand Luther on the subject have been made. There has been an increasing use of the "Apostle's Creed" in the worship service and also a wider use of monthly Communion. Many have been emphasizing certain seasons of the Church Year such as Easter, Passion Week, Pentecost and the Christmas, but interest is growing in using the Church Calender for the whole year.

Dr. Yuzuru Mori, President of the Episcopal Seminary reported on the new prayer book made in 1959 which has used simpler form and simpler characters.Communion itself has taken on greater meaning through

emphasizing not only the sacrificial features but the resurrection perience of explanation of the Sacrament. Prayers for the congregation to be said with the priest have been added before and after the communion. Also a reciprocal confession with the priest first making a confession and request for forgiveness to the communicants, followed by the confession of the communicants.

Dr. Chitoshe Kishi, Pesident of the Lutheran Semmary mentioned that a special commission to study liturgy had been organized. Twelve denomination belonging to the Lutheran tradition are thinking about uniting and the possiblity of using a colloquial liturgy is being considered.

Dr. Masuda, of the Japan Baptist Convention emphasizes the free form of service, but some of the younger men have become more interested in a theological emphasis. There still remains a strong revivalistic tradition with many and with some of the younger missionaries.

In concluding, we find the United Church in the middle still stressing the importance of the sermon but with a growing interest in the meaning of communion, with the Baptist still stressing the free form, on the one side, and the Episcopalean and Lutheran traditions with and built up form on the other. There is an increased use of the colloquial Bible, and the new hymnbook which is very ecumenical since it not only includes tunes from abroad but Japanese hymns as well. Concerning the indigenous problem, most pastors do not think about this because they are more interested in the traditional form of worship, feeling quite strongly about the dangers of syncretism. Eventually they feel a more natural expression will grow out of the traditional forms.

JAPAN CHURCH WORLD SERVICE ORGANIZES MILK STATIONS FOR MINES

"The Japanese coal industry is experiencing in acute form the same difficulties that are plaguing the coal business the world over as a result of an energy revolution." Although the rate of economic growth for 1959 will be no less than 11%, the coal industry is undergoing a critical depression. Rehabilitation is not only a serious economic problem but a social problem as well.

Manufacturers are gradually switching to heavy oil despite government restrictions limiting amount of foreign currency for importing oil and restrictions on the construction of heavy oil boilers. The cost of coal at Yokohama is $ 16.67, per ton for (6,200 calories) which is 10-15 % higher than the equivalent in heavy oil. For coal to compete with petroleum production, it will have to be cut back to 30,000,000 tons by rationalization. In 1958, 49,000,000 tons were produced, a decrease of 3,000,000 tons from 1957. This will mean laying off about 100,000 laborers. At present the 260,000 miners in this industry produce only about 14 tons per man per month.

The coal miners union is opposed to firing and the transfer or personal. One reason is that the government has no yet taken measures to guarantee relief and reemployment to workers laid off. The Government plans to spend about $ 1,900,000 for vocational re-training, but so far concrete plans for expansion of unemployment insurance and public works has not appeared. Coal supplies 35 % of Japan's demand for energy, 39 % is supplied by electricity, and 20 % by petroleum.
(Source-Japan Quarterly, Asahi Publishing Co March 1960)

There are over 50,000 employed and multiplied by the average number of 4-5 in a family, the number involved is overwhelming. In the Northen Kyushu area there are over 100 small companies. In compliance with a government law, many mines have closed. Last year 152 mines closed, but

he situation is further complicated by change of ownership of the mines nd the inability of these small and middle size companies to help in dverse circumstances. Layoffs are still continuing in the industry.

Fully realizing that relief work will not solve the problem, but hat something had to be done urgently, JCWS has already sent 500,000 ounds of flour and 10,000 pounds of milk to supplement the school lunch rogram of children in the Kyushu area. As a result of Mr. Ken Buma's ecent inspection trip to the Kyushu area, milk stations will be set up n the Tagawa City area. Meeting with ten ministers in the area, it was ecided to immediately set up 4 milk stations dispensing vitamins, milk nd corn mush. Plans are to help infants and pre-school children in the rea who are not receiving the benefits of the school lunch program. Of he 7,000-8,000 in need in the Tagawa City area, the pre-school age hildren number approximately 1,500-2,000. This program is planned for weeks. If more funds and personnel for dispensing aid are available he program will be expanded and extended to other areas as well. The ity government in Tagawa city is loaning JCWS cars and assisting in etting up the stations. About $ 170.00 has been received locally to efray freight costs from Tokyo.

ANGERS OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT OF ISE-NEED FOR CHRISTIAN CEMETERY DISCUSSED BY CHRISTIAN FEDERATION (Kiristo Kyo Rengokai)

Mr. Keitaro Nishimura, chairman of the organization and also chairman of the Church Affairs Department of the National hristian Council convened the January meeting at which the Ise Shrine robem was discussed. Before the end of the war, the priests were fficers receiving government support, but according to the new con- stitution religious institutions were cut off from government support. hat makes Ise a unique problem is that the 'mirror' which is one of the ymbols of Emperor is kept there. It is not a property of the shrine s are symbols at other shrines, it is the property of the Emperor. The hrine itself, however, is a religious judicial person.

Mr. Asuma Matsunaga, former minister of education, has been appointed chairman of a special commission set up by the Liberal-Democratic arty to study the problem. They tend to feel that since the Emperor is a ymbol and the Emperor Symbol is at Ise, that this is not a special eligion as defined by the law.

The feeling expressed in the discussion was that if the government ould give support either directly or indirectly, that there would be onfusion in the minds of the ordinary people between the symbol as such nd the shrine where one goes to worship.

Also discussed was the need for Christian cemeteries. The tradi- ional way of burying is for the family to lease a plot at the local emple, where members of the family are buried with their ancestors. his land is the property of the temple and one leases the land. Many hristians have been buried in temple cemeteries before but a recent ase shows the difficulties besetting evangelism when one has to always onsider his desire to be buried with his ancestors. Rev. Mr. Shigeru iyazaki, of the United Christian Church in Zushi (near Kamakura) elated the story of a very well respected family in his church. The an's wife died recently and the priest at the temple refused him per- ission to bury his wife with her ancestors. There are some national emeteries but in rural areas this consideration of a 'resting place' or the ashes of the deceased must be a very real obstacle to evangelism.

MATHEW OGAWA TO VISIT LATIN AMERICA

Mr. Mathew S. Ogawa, Executive Director of AVACO (The Audio Visual Activities Department of the NCC in Japan) is scheduled to leave New York on February 2nd to visit and survey three Latin American countries, including Mexico, Guatemala, and Colombia. For the past three weeks Mr. Ogawa has been in Stoney Point, New York and in New York City, participating in the study and prparation of the Ecumencial Study Committee of the United Presbyterian Church. This committee, composed entirely of nationals from the lands of the younger churches, is to examine thoroughly the work of the United Presbyterian Church in ecumencical mission in Asia, Africa, South America and the Near East, and make recommendations for future policy and practices to the newly united church. Mr. Ogawa will return to Japan about February 17th.

Notes: Mrs. Axling of the Baptist Missionary group passed away on January 7th after a 10 month period of illness. She was 86 years old and had been living with her husband in the Atherton Baptist Home in Alhabra, California, since their return to the States in 1955. Mr. and Mrs. Axling originally came to Japan in 1901, interned during the war, and returned to the field in 1947. While here in Japan they worked in the Morioka and later in the Tokyo areas. Upon return to the States Mr. Axling spent most of his time speaking for the National Christian Council.